



**City of Stockton Youth Sports
Flag Football Rules**
Updated December 2023



I. Eligibility and Divisions

- In order to participate in the City of Stockton Youth Sports Programs, each participant must be enrolled in the program and have submitted a completed Youth Sports Registration Form. This form must be signed by a parent or guardian for the registration to be valid.
- Each player must be wearing their team shirt and their required equipment in order to participate in a game. There may be no alterations to the size of the game shirts. A list of required equipment can be found below.
- Each division is broken down by grade. There are 4 divisions:
 - 1st/2nd Grade
 - 3rd/4th Grade
 - 5th/6th Grade
 - 7th/8th Grade

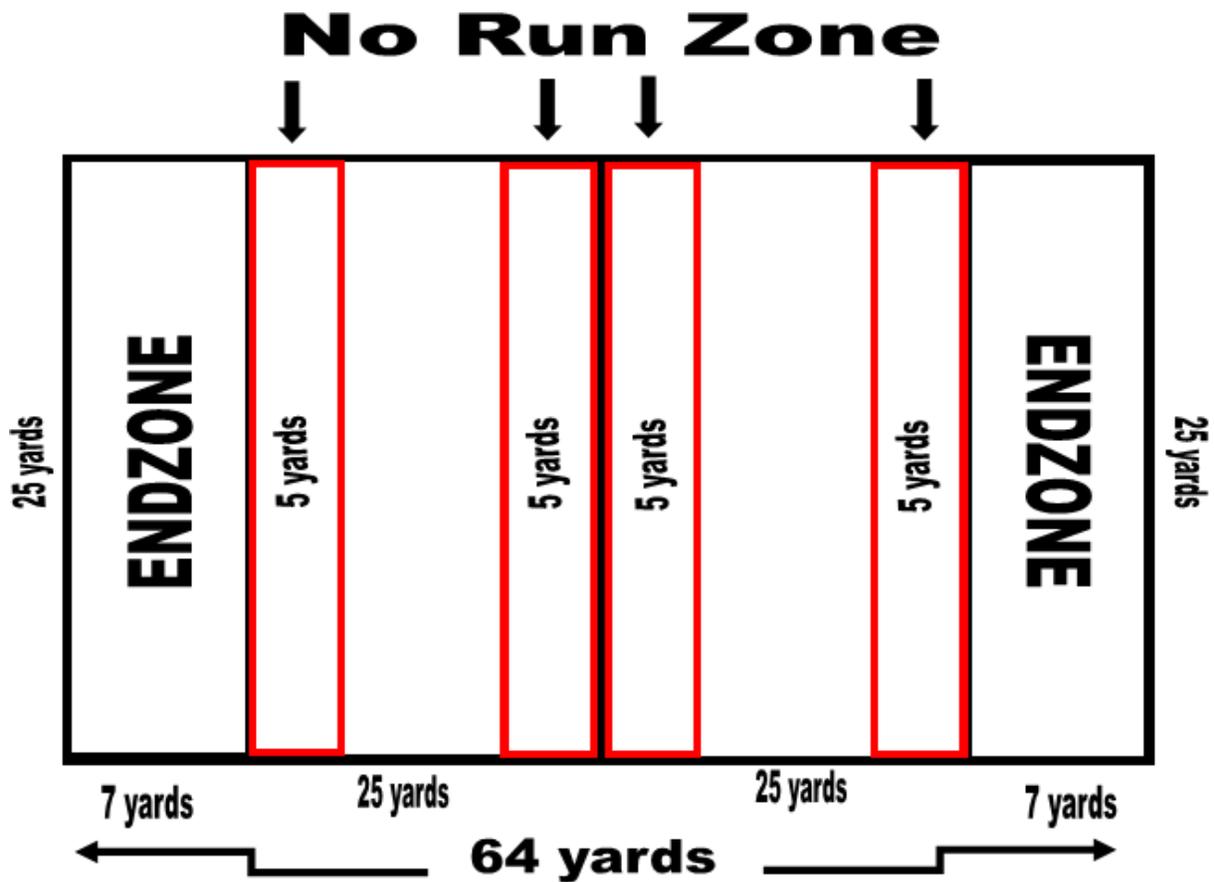
*Divisions are subject to change. Older divisions may be changed to 3rd/4th/5th and 6th/7th/8th if needed.

II. Game Format and Field Dimensions

- No official score is kept. This is a purely recreational league. No player stats or standings will be kept.
- **Game Length**
 - 1st/2nd Grade: 10-minute warmup, followed by two (2) 15-minute halves
 - 3rd/4th Grade: 20-minute halves
 - 5th/6th Grade: 20-minute halves
 - 7th/8th Grade: 20-minute halves
- **Clock**
 - 1st / 2nd grade will have a running clock. The clock only stops on official/injury time-out, coach time-outs, or half time
 - 3rd grade through 8th grade will have a running clock unless the ball carrier steps out of bounds, or a time-out is called. During the last two minutes of the second half the clock will stop on every dead ball
 - Halftime will be 2 minutes long
 - Each team will have two (2) 30-second time-outs **PER** half
- **Field Players**
 - There must be a minimum of 3 players on each team to qualify the game as an official game.
 - 1st/2nd Grade: 6v6, coach is quarterback
 - 3rd/4th Grade: 6v6
 - 5th/6th Grade: 6v6
 - 7th/8th Grade: 6v6
- **Ball Size**
 - 1st/2nd Grade: Junior size football
 - 3rd /4th Grade: Youth size football
 - 5th/6th Grade: Youth size football
 - 7th/8th Grade Youth size football

- **Field Dimensions**

- 1st & 2nd- Field dimensions are 50 yards by 25 yards. Endzones are 5 yards by 25 yards. Each half is 20 yards by 25 yards. No run zones are 5 yards before the half.
- 3rd – 8th The field is 64 yards by 25 yards. Endzones are 7 yards by 25 yards. Each half is 25 yards by 25 yards. No run zones are 5 yards before the half, and 5 yards before the endzone.
- There are four (4) no run zones, however only 2 are enforced for each team. The no run zones that will be enforced will be the 5-yards going towards the mid-field line, and the 5-yards going into the endzone to score.



III. Required Equipment

- All players are required to wear their team jersey for each game. There can be no alterations to the size of the jersey (no cutting the jersey).
- It is strongly recommended that players wear a mouthpiece.
- Closed toe athletic shoes are required. Cleats are not required, but they are strongly recommended. Only rubber cleats will be permitted.
- Absolutely no jewelry is allowed. This includes earrings, rings, bracelets, wristbands, barrettes, necklaces, or any other items the referee or coaches feel could cause injury to the player or other players. All earrings should be removed prior to every games.
- No hats are permitted during play.
- Glasses can be worn if necessary, but they will be worn at players own risk.

IV. Substitutions

- All substitutions must be waved in by the scores table/official.
- Substitutions will be broken up as follows:
 - The first half will be broken up into two 5-minute parts. One group will play the first 5-minutes, the second group will play the next 5-minutes. The second half will be a free substitution period.
 - 1st Grade and up: Each half will be broken up into three 5-minute parts. One group will play the complete first 5-minutes, a second group will play the complete second 5-minutes. If there are more than 10 players on the team, the remaining players must play in the complete third 5-minutes. If there are not more than 10 players, the third part will be a free sub period in both halves.

<i>First Half</i>	<i>First 5 Min; Group 1</i>	<i>Second 5 Min; Group 2</i>	<i>Third 5 Min; Group 1:</i>	<i>Fourth 5 Min; Group 2:</i>
<i>Second Half</i>	<i>First 5 Min; Group 1</i>	<i>Second 5 Min; Group 2</i>	<i>Third 5 Min; Group 1</i>	<i>Fourth 5 Min; Group 2: Free subs</i>

- During a free substitution period, subs may only be made during:
 - A dead ball or out of bounds
 - An injury/injury time-out
 - A regular time-out
 - After a score or turnover

V. General Rules & Guidelines for all Levels

- **Play Rule:** All players must play a minimum of half the game. The games manager and referees/score table will let the coach know if they need to sub players in. In the event a coach does not sub kids in who need to play, the games manager or official/score table may stop the game and make the substitution.

- **Spinning/Jumping/Use of Hands:** Spinning, jumping or hurdling, or using your hands to defend against players going after flags is illegal and will result in a penalty. Multiple offences in a game may result in a 2-minute penalty.
- **Rushing the Quarterback:** Rushing the quarterback is only permitted in 3rd grade divisions and up. The referee will mark a 7-yard rush area, all rushers must be behind that mark in order to rush. Rushing the quarterback in front of the marker will result in an illegal rush penalty. Defenders not rushing the quarterback who are defending receivers may line up on the line of scrimmage.
- **Passing:** Quarterback has 10 seconds to pass the ball. Quarterback can not run the ball.
- **Catching:** Player must complete the catch in bounds for the reception to count as a catch.
- **Penalties:** Penalties may be called before, or after a play begins. Penalty yardage will be assessed from the LOS, not from the spot of the foul.
- **Blocking:** There is no blocking with your body or hands. Any blocking with hands or body (i.e. a hip check) will result in an illegal blocking penalty.
- **Unsportsmanlike Conduct (UNSC)/Unnecessary Roughness (UR):** UNSC penalties may be assessed to a player, coach(s), or a team (for conduct of the team and/or the teams spectators). UR penalties may be assessed to players, coaches, or a team. If the referee believes the act that caused the penalty to be intentional, there will be a minimum of a two (2) minute cooling off period before the player will be permitted to come back in. If a team does not have a sub, the team will have to play down a man until the cooling off period is over. Two UNSC or two UR penalties in a season will result in a suspension of a game, and due to the nature of the act may result in expulsion from the program.
- **Bench Area:** Only the players and cleared City of Stockton coaches are allowed in the bench area. There may be a maximum of two (2) coaches in the bench area. No spectators or any non-authorized personnel will be allowed on the bench.
- **Flags/ Flag Guarding:**
 - If the quarterback's flags fall off while in possession of the ball, the play will be ruled down where the flags fell off. If the ball carriers' flags fall off during a pass play or interception return and they have possession of the ball, they player will be down on a "two hand touch" by a defensive player.
 - No player will be permitted to use their hands to hit away hands trying to grab flags or assist in keeping their flags on during a play. This will result in a flag guarding penalty.
- **Interceptions:** If an interception occurs, the player who made the play will have a chance to run the ball back for a touchdown. If they do not make it back to the endzone, the ball will be placed at the spot of the dead ball. If an interception happens in the endzone, that team will gain possession on their own 5-yard line. An interception that is returned to the opposing endzone during a PAT is worth 2 points.
- **Fumbles:** are considered dead.
- **Point After Touchdown (PAT):** Team will be given two (2) options for the PAT. The first option will be worth 1 point and it will be from the 5-yard line. Teams may not run the ball on a 1-point attempt (even if a penalty has been assessed). The second option

is worth 2 points and it will be from the 12-yard line. This can be either a pass or a run play.

VI. Sportsmanship and Foul Language

- All players, coaches, and spectators will be expected to maintain a high level of sportsmanship and respect towards one another.
- Trash talking and verbal abuse towards officials, staff, players, or coaches will be subject to a warning, ejection from the game, and possible ejection from the league. The coach will be responsible for the actions of their teams' spectators. A UNSC penalty may be given to the bench or coach due to actions from the spectators.
 - All players and spectators will be on opposite sides from each other. Any spectator that enters the field of play will be asked to leave, if they do not then the game will be forfeited, and that spectator may be subject to disciplinary actions.
- Any foul language will **not be tolerated**. Violation of this by players, coaches, or spectators will result in ejection from the game.
- Fighting of any kind by players, coaches, or spectators will not be tolerated and will result in the ejection from the game/field and possible expulsion from the program.
- Handshakes to display good sportsmanship after the game will be expected from every participant and coach. It is the coach's responsibility to make sure their team complies with the handshake after the games. If any player refuses to shake hands, spits on their hand, or uses unnecessary force in the handshake may face a suspension of the next game. Multiple offenses may result in the expulsion from the program.

VII. Official/Unofficial Games

- The clock will start at Game Time. If a team does not have enough players to field a complete team 5 minutes after game start the game.
- If they do not have enough to complete the team by 5-minute mark, the game will be considered an unofficial game.
- After the game is considered an unofficial game, players can be loaned to the other team so a game can be played with the remaining time. The time will not reset if a game is played as unofficial **or** if the team gets enough players to complete the team.
- An unofficial game will still be fully officiated and scored. Only players who have a signed registration form for the current season may play or be loaned in an unofficial game.
- School/pre-made teams may loan players to a rec team in an unofficial game. Younger players may move up to participate in an unofficial game, however it will be up to the discretion of the officials. Older players **may not** participate in a lower division game.
 - A loaned player does not have to be from the team they are playing. The loaned players may be from a team that has already played or has not played yet.

VIII. General Penalties

- The referee will call all penalties.
- Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.

- All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted. (Spot fouls)
- Only the team captain or head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players may not question calls.
- Games or halves may not end on a defensive penalty unless the offense declines it.
- Penalties are assessed live ball then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered complete.
- Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.
- Spot fouls in end zone: Defensive (Ball on one-yard line, first down)/Offensive (Safety)
- Defensive penalties
 - Defensive unnecessary roughness +10 yards and automatic first down
 - Defensive unsportsmanlike conduct +10 yards and automatic first down
 - Offside +5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
 - Illegal rush (Starting rush from inside 7-yard marker) +5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
 - Illegal flag pull (Before the receiver has the ball) +5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
 - Roughing the passer +5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
 - Taunting +5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
- Defensive spot fouls
 - Defensive pass interference Automatic first down
 - Holding +5 yards and automatic first down
 - Stripping +10 yards and automatic first down
 - Screening, blocking or running with the ball -10 yards and loss of down
 - Charging -10 yards and loss of down Flag guarding -10 yards and loss of down
- Offensive penalties
 - Offensive unnecessary roughness -10 yards and loss of down
 - Offensive unsportsmanlike conduct -10 yards and loss of down
 - Offside / false start Illegal forward pass (Any pass received or lands behind the line of scrimmage or throwing a pass after crossing the line of scrimmage) -5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
 - Offensive pass interference -5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
 - Illegal motion (More than one person moving) -5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
 - Delay of game -5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
 - Impeding the rusher -5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
 - Illegal Procedure -5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
 - Taunting -5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down